

October 18, 2010

Buried Secrets: Confessions of a Nuclear War Planner

CHAPTER OUTLINE

Preface

- At the same time I copied the 47 volumes, 7000 Top Secret pages, of the Pentagon Papers from my office at the RAND Corporation in 1969-70, I also copied an even larger number of other classified documents and pages—including the entire contents of my top secret safe—with the intention of releasing them to Congress and the public after the publication of the Vietnam Study, either before or after my first trial.
- These other documents included some Vietnam studies I had done for the Nixon Administration, but mainly they consisted of my classified notes from years of top secret work on nuclear war planning, command and control of nuclear weapons, and participation in and studies of nuclear crises. They included verbatim extracts or copies of critical documents, plans, studies and cables, and classified studies by others. *crucial*
- This included a top secret Kissinger study (NSSM-3) that examined current and proposed nuclear attack options. The *smallest* attack option available to President Nixon in 1969 was calculated to kill 90 million people.
- These nuclear-related data over the previous decade were, above all, what I felt called on to disclose to the American public and Congress, much more than the Vietnam Study itself. (I gave priority to release of the latter only because bombs were falling at that time on Vietnam.)
- It was especially to disclose our recklessness with respect to nuclear threats and war that I was prepared and fully expected to go to prison for life, if not for the initial release then for the subsequent ones that I saw as more important.
- This did not come about, and has remained secret, because most of the nuclear documents were lost. They were buried for safekeeping by my brother and subsequently displaced by a hurricane (!); it was not until my trial for the Pentagon Papers was ended that I accepted that they were irrecoverable. *lost gone*
- Forty years later, though some have been declassified in part, most of the contents of what I meant to reveal then has remained in government safes as secret from the public and Congress as my buried copies. I now propose to

disclose in as much detail as possible what I have been describing more briefly over the years to concerned members of Congress and in interviews and lectures, sometimes to captive audiences of fellow anti-nuclear resisters in jails.

Introduction: A Mass Murder Mystery

- A Joint Chiefs of Staff memo--Top Secret Eyes Only for the President—reveals to me that the annual operational plan for general nuclear war proposes in a wide range of circumstances to kill 600 million people: Soviets, Chinese, satellite nations, West Europe and neutrals. (Later studies show this to be roughly half of the actual foreseeable deaths, with the possibility of extinguishing most complex life on earth.)
- Humans—American humans—knowingly created this instrument of mass murder; some years later, the Soviets imitated it. The two Doomsday Machines still exist, on alert. The mystery: how did this come about? With what motives? Can humanity be brought to dismantle them?

The Bomb and me: our first meeting

- Perhaps alone among American citizens, a class of 13-year-olds spends a week in 1944 considering, for a required essay, what the implications would be for the world of a Uranium-235 bomb--1000 times more powerful than existing block-busters--coming into existence. We all conclude that this would be bad news for humanity, no matter who had it first.
- Some nine months later, on August 6, 1945, I recognize the subject of our project in the headlines: the Bomb was here, and even though it was invented by Americans, we had already used it, on a city. I have a sense of dread not shared by most Americans, whose first thoughts of this weapon are that it is bringing victory and saving lives.
- Another mystery, mirroring and perhaps illuminating the larger one: how did this boy, already horrified by the terror bombing associated with the Nazis and alerted even prior to Hiroshima to the still-greater terrors of atomic weapons, grow up to become a nuclear war planner?

The Making of a Cold Warrior

- My senior year in high-school and early years in college, the Cold War emerges: Stalin = Hitler. The Truman Doctrine, Czechoslovakian coup, the

Berlin Blockade (Truman's first public threats of nuclear first-use, sending B-29s to Britain), Hiss and Rosenberg, fall of China, Soviet A-bomb. Korea: US/UN response to aggression (where Eisenhower secretly threatens nuclear first-use). After student deferments, I volunteer for officer training in the Marine Corps. (During my first weeks at Quantico, Eisenhower offers nuclear weapons to the French to rescue Dienbienphu.) In 1956 I extend my two-year tour to accompany my battalion to the Mediterranean in expectation of the Suez Crisis (which brings nuclear threats from Khrushchev).

- Back at Harvard in the Society of Fellows, I continue my study of decision-making under uncertainty (the subject of my senior honors thesis), bargaining and threats. My Lowell Lectures on *The Art of Coercion* include "Theory and Practice of Blackmail" and "The Political Uses of Madness," the latter analyzing Hitler's successful threats in the Thirties and drawing an analogy to Khrushchev's current nuclear threats over Berlin.
- By invitation, I repeat that lecture to Henry Kissinger's graduate seminar at Harvard. (A dozen years later, as President Nixon is secretly enacting what he calls privately his "madman theory" by nuclear threats against North Vietnam, Kissinger recalls this lecture positively in my presence at San Clemente. "I have learned more from Dan Ellsberg," he tells my companion Lloyd Shearer, "than from anyone else on the subject of bargaining." Flattering, but a hair-raising allusion to a Hitlerian strategy by the president's assistant for national security.)

The Spectre Haunting RAND: A Nuclear Pearl Harbor

- As a summer consultant at the RAND Corporation in 1958, I join "the Wizards of Armageddon," the major theorists of deterrence: Albert Wohlstetter, Herman Kahn, Andrew Marshall, Harry Rowen and others. From classified discussion and studies, I come quickly to share their obsession: deterring a near-term Soviet nuclear surprise attack.
- The problem my colleagues and I focus on day and night and weekends: how to kill as many Russians as possible, reliably, after and despite a Soviet first strike exploiting vulnerabilities Wohlstetter and the others had discerned in our retaliatory capabilities.
- In effect, I join an apocalyptic cult, regarded skeptically by most of those without clearances (and by Army and Navy intelligence, whose doubts were regarded by RAND's Air Force sponsors as self-serving to the point of treason), but buttressed by CIA estimates of an impending "missile gap" and by the sense of urgency and the charismatic brilliance of my mentors.

Hair-trigger Doomsday Machine

- At RAND as a full-time employee in the summer of 1959, I am led by my academic studies to focus on the preeminent problem of decision-making under uncertainty: a president's choice of executing the nuclear war plans, or not, in circumstances of ambiguous warning or ongoing conventional war.
- In a task force studying this "command and control" problem in the Pacific theater, I become familiar—probably more so than any other civilian at the time—with the structure of plans and alert procedures for general nuclear war, and with their contradictions and peculiarities. These include:
 - Secret delegation of presidential authority to initiate nuclear war in various circumstances to theater commanders (in contrast to public policy declared to this day);
 - Sub-delegation of this authority to subordinate commanders, and simple assumption of authority at some low tactical levels: in short, many fingers on the button;
 - *verb-
unlike others* No locks preventing deliberate unauthorized launch or detonation exist on nuclear weapons (such "permissive action links" first introduced under JFK are resisted for years by the Strategic Air Command and still longer by Navy submarines);
 - Lack of any plan for fighting Russians anywhere without simultaneously obliterating China;
 - Lack of provision for any reserve force or alternative targeting options: all-or-nothing plans against a fixed target list, what Herman Kahn termed "spasm war" (or "wargasm");
 - Deliberate omission of any "Stop" code once bombers had been released (as in "Dr. Strangelove");
 - Universal disregard or bypassing of "two-man rules" meant to prevent one man from launching strikes without authenticated authorization;
 - Under all circumstances of general war—defined secretly as "armed conflict [involving more than a brigade or two] with the Soviet Union" (as, perhaps, over Berlin, Iran, Yugoslavia)—the obliteration of every city in the Soviet Union and China;

- “Collateral damage” to civilians from attacks on nearby or collocated military or industrial targets regarded as “bonus,” to be maximized rather than avoided, in the Soviet Union and China, and casualties from fallout in the satellites, West Europe and neighboring neutral states (Afghanistan, Finland, Japan, India...) to be accepted on the scale of hundreds of millions;
- Plans are almost entirely premised on the desirability and expectation of a U.S. first strike, either preemptively on ambiguous warning or escalating a limited conflict: not, as in the public mind, responding to unambiguous arrival of attacking warheads;
- Contrary to public agreements with Japan, nuclear weapons are routinely aboard U.S. Navy ships in Japanese harbors, and are permanently stationed in tidal waters of Japan at Iwakuni Marine Base;
- Significant possibilities exist of accidents involving nuclear weapons and major false alarms (both frequently experienced) and of unauthorized launch.
- In sum, as Harry Rowen (^{not that time} now a Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense) and I conclude after viewing Kubrick’s film with professional eyes in 1964, ⁴⁵“Dr. Strangelove” is a documentary.”

Whiz Kids

- With many, though not all, of my notes and reports on these anomalies and dangers still buried in RAND and Pentagon safes--or somewhere underground in New York--my efforts and those of others bring about little change under Eisenhower (though I spend the Christmas season, 1960, in a high-level task force for Secretary of Defense Thomas Gates helping design a command system to preserve presidential control under Soviet surprise attack).
- When the new Secretary under Kennedy, Robert McNamara, brings a crew from RAND, the so-called “whiz kids,” to work for him at the Pentagon—including Charlie Hitch (my boss at RAND) and my friends Harry Rowen and Alain Enthoven—I become a consultant to the Office of Secretary of Defense, spending up to half the year in Washington. I have the run of the issues on Rowen’s desk.
- After briefing the president’s assistant for national security, McGeorge Bundy, on most of the problems described above, he names me to a one-man investigation of the delegation of presidential nuclear authority (though ultimately, against my recommendation, Kennedy secretly continues the Eisenhower delegation and sub-

delegation, “rather than reverse the decision of the Great General,” as Bundy’s deputy puts it).

- Row ~~er~~ assigns to me the preeminent opportunity to right what I see wrong in the Eisenhower-era plans and procedures by drafting the Basic National Security Policy (BNSP), the president’s top secret guidance to the Joint Chiefs of Staff (eventually issued, under JFK, by the Secretary of Defense instead) for the annual operational plans for general nuclear war.
- Earlier BNSP’s under Eisenhower are brief, three or four pages; my thoroughgoing revision is almost twenty pages, reversing earlier policy in detail. Eventually my draft, unchanged, is issued by McNamara as SecDef Guidance to the JCS, accompanied by implementing instructions to the Strategic Air Command (also drafted in large part by me and Enthoven, with assistance from others).
- “My” revised guidance is the basis for the operational war plans under Kennedy—reviewed by me for Deputy Secretary of Defense Roswell Gilpatric in 1962, 1963 and 1964—and has been reported by insiders and scholars to become the basic framework for U.S. strategic war plans ever since.
- (In contrast to guidance prior to 1961, it has never been completely declassified. However, my own draft copies of it, along with my memos to the Secretary and Assistant Secretary of Defense highlighting and explaining the changes from the Eisenhower plans, survive the ~~burial~~ ^{loss} of much of my other files.)
- My effort to alert superiors to the dangers of stationing nuclear weapons off Iwakuni in Japan (unreflected in the records of the Secretary of Defense’s Assistant for Nuclear Affairs, and lied about by the Navy) leads to McNamara’s ordering the situation changed. His directive is withdrawn after vehement protest from the Chief of Naval Operations (who asks, unsuccessfully, for my firing from RAND).
- My urgent effort to have the President possess and read a copy of the JCS war plan (to scare him into directing radical changes) fails. McGeorge Bundy’s request for a copy for the president is summarily rebuffed by the Joint Staff. A promise by the JCS to accompany a briefing on the plan to Bundy, McNamara and Gilpatric at the Pentagon with a copy of the plan itself is defaulted on; as I ^{The President} point out to Gilpatric, ~~he~~ ^{he} has been left only with a copy of the briefing, which omits crucial details of the plan (including the broad range of circumstances under which it is intended to be executed, exterminating the “Sino-Soviet Bloc” and much else).
- At Gilpatric’s request, I draft a long set of questions he sends to the JCS ostensibly on their briefing (actually, reflecting their real plan, which I get from the Air Staff) revealing to them that someone working for the Office of Secretary

of Defense has a detailed knowledge of “where the bodies are buried.” After repeated requests for extension, the questions are never answered; but they have the effect he hopes for, of reducing dissimulation and resistance to the new guidance.

- ?
- I participate in a high-level Berlin Crisis Game, which in light of Khrushchev’s belligerence and supposed ICBM superiority—he has just renewed atmospheric testing and exploded the largest warhead ever tested, equivalent to 58 million tons of high explosive—leads some participants to conclude, as Abe Chayes, Counsellor of the State Department puts it to me, “Berlin is hopeless; we have to withdraw.” Around the same time President Kennedy increases the defense budget, mobilizes reserves and calls on Americans to build fallout shelters.
 - In a visit to SAC Headquarters in Omaha in August, I learn that SAC Commander Thomas Powers approves my guidance. But I also learn, from the chief of SAC war plans, that Powers believes the Soviets at that time have “1000” operational ICBMs (the U.S. has 40); though, somewhat contradictorily, he has joined with the other Chiefs in assuring Kennedy that if the Berlin Crisis should force the president to order a U.S. first strike, the U.S. would suffer no more than 10 million deaths.

Collapse (and Reversal) of the Missile Gap

- In late September, 1961, a Special National Intelligence Estimate (SNIE) reports the astonishing fact, reflecting comprehensive coverage of Soviet sites by the secret program of satellite reconnaissance, that the Soviets have less than ten ICBMs. I learn in the White House that the actual number, confirmed in the next NIE, is four.
- Not the one thousand estimated by SAC, not the 120 or 160 mentioned as likely in the most recent NIE of June (against the prescient dissent in footnotes by Army and Navy intelligence of “a few”): **four**. The U.S. had ten times as many.
- ~~More significantly~~ ^{*in addition*}, we had some 160 IRBMs in range of Russia in Italy, Britain and Turkey; about 120 Polaris submarine warheads at sea; and about **2000** long-range strategic bombers (the Soviets had 192), plus about a thousand tactical bombers in range of the Soviet Union.

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One of the latter was a Top Secret Kissinger study for Nixon (NSSM-3) that examined current and proposed nuclear attack options. The *smallest* attack option available to President Nixon in 1969 was calculated to kill 90 million people.

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members of Congress and in interviews and lectures, sometimes to captive audiences of fellow anti-nuclear resisters in jails.

✓ **Introduction: A Mass Murder Mystery (see sample chapter)**

- A Joint Chiefs of Staff memo--Top Secret Eyes Only for the President—reveals to me that the annual operational plan for general nuclear war proposes in a wide range of circumstances to kill 600 million people: Soviets, Chinese, satellite nations, West Europe and neutrals. (Later studies show this to be roughly half of the actual foreseeable deaths, with the possibility of extinguishing most complex life on earth.)
- Humans—American humans—knowingly created this instrument of mass murder; some years later, the Soviets imitated it. The two Doomsday Machines still exist, on alert. The mystery: how did this come about? With what motives? Can humanity be brought to dismantle them?

✓ **1. The Bomb and me: first meeting**

- In 1944 a class of 13-year-olds, of which I am a member, spends a week considering for a required essay what the implications would be for the world of a Uranium-235 bomb--1000 times more powerful than existing block-busters--coming into existence. We all conclude that this would be bad news for humanity, no matter who had it first.
- Some nine months later, on August 6, 1945, I recognize the subject of our project in the headlines: the Bomb was here, and even though it was invented by Americans, we had already used it, on a city. I have a sense of dread not shared by most Americans, whose first thoughts of this weapon are that it is bringing victory and saving lives.
- Another mystery, mirroring and perhaps illuminating the larger one: how did this boy, already horrified by the terror bombing associated with the Nazis and alerted even prior to Hiroshima to the still-greater terrors of atomic weapons, grow up to become a nuclear war planner?

? **2. The Making of a Cold Warrior**

- My senior year in high-school and early years in college, the Cold War emerges, with an engulfing ideology: Stalin=Hitler. The Truman Doctrine, Czechoslovakian coup, the Berlin Blockade (Truman's first public threats

of nuclear first-use, sending B-29s to Britain), Hiss and Rosenberg, fall of China, Soviet A-bomb. Korea: US/UN response to aggression (where Eisenhower secretly threatens nuclear first-use). After student deferments, I volunteer for officer training in the Marine Corps. (During my first weeks at Quantico, Eisenhower offers nuclear weapons to the French to rescue Dienbienphu.) In 1956 I extend my two-year tour to accompany my battalion to the Mediterranean in expectation of the Suez Crisis (which brings nuclear threats from Khrushchev).

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3. The Spectre Haunting RAND: A Nuclear Pearl Harbor

- As a summer consultant at the RAND Corporation in 1958, I join "the Wizards of Armageddon," the major theorists of deterrence: Albert Wohlstetter, Herman Kahn, Andrew Marshall, Harry Rowen and others. From classified discussion and studies, I come quickly to share their obsession: deterring a near-term Soviet nuclear surprise attack.
- The problem my colleagues and I focus on day and night: how to reliably kill as many Russians as possible after and despite a Soviet first strike, and to do so with superior missile forces by exploiting vulnerabilities Wohlstetter and the other theorists had discerned in our retaliatory capabilities.
- In effect, I join an apocalyptic cult, regarded skeptically by most of those without clearances, but buttressed by CIA estimates of an impending "missile gap" and by the sense of urgency and the charismatic brilliance of my mentors.

4. A Hair-trigger Doomsday Machine

- At RAND as a full-time employee in the summer of 1959, I am led by my academic studies to focus on the preeminent problem of decision-making under uncertainty: a president's choice of executing the nuclear war plans, or not, in circumstances of ambiguous warning or ongoing conventional war.
- In a task force studying this "command and control" problem in the Pacific theater, I become familiar—probably more so than any other civilian at the time—with the structure of plans and alert procedures for general nuclear war, and with their contradictions and peculiarities. (see sample chapter) These include:
 - ✓ (7) Secret delegation of presidential authority to initiate nuclear war in various circumstances to theater commanders (in contrast to public policy declared to this day);
 - ✓ Sub-delegation of this authority to subordinate commanders, and simple assumption of authority at some low tactical levels: in short, many fingers on the button;
 - ✓ Lack of any plan for fighting Russians anywhere without simultaneously obliterating China;
 - ✓ Lack of provision for any reserve force or alternative targeting options: all-or-nothing plans against a fixed target list, what Herman Kahn termed "spasm war" (or "wargasm");
 - ✓ Under all circumstances of general war—defined secretly as "armed conflict [involving more than a brigade or two] with the Soviet Union" (as, perhaps, over Berlin, Iran, Yugoslavia)—the obliteration of every city in the Soviet Union and China;
 - ✓ "Collateral damage" to civilians from attacks on nearby military or industrial targets regarded as "bonus," to be maximized rather than avoided, in the Soviet Union and China, and casualties from fallout in the satellites, West Europe and neighboring neutral states (Afghanistan, Finland, Japan, India...) to be accepted on the scale of hundreds of millions;
 - ✓ Plans are almost entirely premised on the desirability and expectation of a U.S. first strike, either preemptively on ambiguous warning or escalating a limited conflict: not, as in the public mind, responding to unambiguous arrival of attacking warheads;

- ✓ ○ Contrary to public agreements with Japan, nuclear weapons are routinely aboard U.S. Navy ships in Japanese harbors, and are permanently stationed in tidal waters of Japan off Iwakuni Marine Air Base;
- ✓ ○ Lack of locks on nuclear weapons preventing deliberate unauthorized launch or detonation. (Such “permissive action links” first introduced under JFK are resisted for years by the Strategic Air Command and still longer on Navy submarines);
- ✓ ○ Deliberate omission of any “Stop” code once bombers have been released to attack (as dramatized in the movie: *Dr. Strangelove*);
- ✓ ○ Universal disregard or bypassing of “two-man rules” meant to prevent one man from launching strikes without authenticated authorization;
- ✓ ○ Significant possibilities exist of accidents involving nuclear weapons and major false alarms (both frequently experienced) and of unauthorized launch.
- ✓ ○ In sum, *Dr. Strangelove* is a documentary.

5. Confronting the Machine

- • I spend the Christmas season, 1960, in a high-level task force for Secretary of Defense Thomas Gates helping design a command system to preserve presidential control under Soviet surprise attack. Nevertheless, despite my reports and recommendations on many of the above anomalies and dangers, my warnings and those of others bring about little change under Eisenhower. (Half a century later, most of my notes and files of this period are still buried in RAND and Pentagon safes, or underground somewhere in New York and probably lost. *Most, but not all.*)
- • When the new Secretary under Kennedy, Robert McNamara, brings a crew from RAND, the so-called “whiz kids,” to work for him at the Pentagon—including my boss at RAND Charlie Hitch and my friends Harry Rowen and Alain Enthoven—I become a consultant to the Office of Secretary of Defense, spending up to half the year in Washington. I have the run of the issues on Rowen’s desk.
- ✓ • After briefing the president’s assistant for national security, McGeorge Bundy, on most of the problems described above, he names me to a one-man investigation of the delegation of presidential nuclear authority (though ultimately, against my recommendation, Kennedy secretly continues the Eisenhower delegation and sub-delegation, “rather than reverse the decision of the Great General,” as Bundy’s deputy puts it).

- Rowen assigns to me the preeminent opportunity to right what I see wrong in the Eisenhower-era plans and procedures by drafting the Basic National Security Policy (BNSP), the president's top secret guidance to the Joint Chiefs of Staff (eventually issued, under JFK, by the Secretary of Defense) for the annual operational plans for general nuclear war.

○
draft BNSP
revising BNSP's

- Earlier BNSP's under Eisenhower are brief, three or four pages; my thoroughgoing revision is almost twenty pages, reversing earlier policy in detail. Eventually my draft, unchanged, is issued by McNamara as SecDef Guidance to the JCS, accompanied by implementing instructions to the Strategic Air Command (also drafted in large part by me and Enthoven, with assistance from others). Changes include, among other things:

- Alternative target systems, including presidential options to **withhold** attacks: a) on China (!); b) on Moscow (to permit war-ending. This was fiercely resisted by proponents of "decapitation"); c) on or near Soviet or Chinese cities; d) on military targets in satellite nations near cities.
- Tighter presidential control, and survivable control by civilian authority.
- Elimination of "bonus" civilian damage; options minimizing civilian deaths and collateral damage from fallout.

- "My" revised guidance is the basis for the operational war plans under Kennedy—reviewed by me for Deputy Secretary of Defense Roswell Gilpatric in 1962, 1963 and 1964—and has been reported by insiders and scholars to become the basic framework for U.S. strategic war plans ever since.

- In contrast to guidance prior to 1961, my Top Secret guidance paper has never been completely declassified. However, my own copies of it, along with my memos to the Secretary and Assistant Secretary of Defense highlighting and explaining the changes from the Eisenhower plans, survive in my possession after loss of the buried files.

- ✓ • My effort to alert superiors to the dangers of stationing nuclear weapons off Iwakuni in Japan (unreflected in the records of the Secretary of Defense's Assistant for Nuclear Affairs, and lied about by the Navy) leads to McNamara's ordering the situation changed. His directive is withdrawn after vehement protest from the Chief of Naval Operations (who asks, unsuccessfully, that I be fired from RAND).

- ✓ • My urgent effort to have the President possess and read a copy of the JCS war plan (to scare him into directing radical changes) is a failure. McGeorge Bundy's request for a copy for the president is summarily rebuffed by the Joint Staff. The JCS default on a promise to accompany their oral briefing on the plan to Bundy,

McNamara and Gilpatric at the Pentagon with a copy of the plan itself, though they purport to do so. When Gilpatric shows me the document they have given him, it is merely a copy of the Top Secret briefing, which omits crucial details of the actual plan (including the broad range of circumstances under which it is designed to be executed, exterminating the “Sino-Soviet Bloc” and much else).

- ✓
○

• At Gilpatric’s request, I draft a long set of Top Secret questions he sends to the JCS ostensibly relating to their briefing (actually, reflecting their real plan, which I retrieve from the Air Staff). These are designed to convey that someone working for the Office of Secretary of Defense has a detailed knowledge of “where the bodies are buried”: dissimulation by them is risky, and honest answers unthinkable. In the words of Bundy’s deputy Robert Komer, on reading my list in the White House: “If these were Japanese generals, they would have to commit suicide on reading these questions.”
- American generals are less sensitive; after repeated requests for more time, the Deputy Secretary’s questions ultimately go unanswered. But as he calculates, they end resistance to the new guidance.
- One of the questions from my list is separated out by Komer and sent to the JCS in the name of President Kennedy: “If your plans for general war are carried out as planned, how many will die in the Soviet Union and China?” This one and a subsequent question asking for the worldwide death toll, surprisingly, does get a fast answer, mentioned in the Introduction above. 600 million dead.
- • I participate in a high-level Berlin Crisis Game involving high officials as players. In light of Khrushchev’s belligerence and supposed ICBM superiority—he has just renewed atmospheric testing and exploded the largest warhead ever tested, equivalent to 58 million tons of high explosive. The game leads some participants to conclude: “Berlin is hopeless; we have to withdraw.”
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• In a visit to SAC Headquarters in Omaha in August, I learn that SAC Commander Thomas Powers approves my guidance. I also learn, from the chief of SAC war plans, that Powers believes the Soviets at that time have “1000” operational ICBMs (the U.S. has 40); though, somewhat contradictorily, he has joined with the other Chiefs in assuring Kennedy that if the Berlin Crisis should force the president to order a U.S. first strike, the U.S. would suffer no more than 10 million deaths.
- • Kennedy finds this JCS estimate un reassuring: as he does a “well-designed” first-strike option with a comparable predicted result presented to him (without my knowledge) by some of my civilian colleagues. Nevertheless, in a speech on Berlin, Kennedy announces an increase in the defense budget, mobilizes reserves, and calls on Americans to build fallout shelters. ○ Kaplan

6.Collapse (and Reversal) of the Missile Gap

- ✓ • In late September, 1961, a Special National Intelligence Estimate (SNIE) reports the astonishing fact, reflecting comprehensive coverage of Soviet sites by the secret program of satellite reconnaissance, that the Soviets have less than ten ICBMs. I learn in the White House that the actual number, confirmed in the next NIE, is four. Not the one thousand estimated by SAC, not the 120 or 160 mentioned as likely in the most recent NIE of June: **four**. The U.S. had ten times as many.
- ✓ • In addition, we had some 60 IRBMs in range of Russia in Italy, Britain and Turkey; about 120 Polaris submarine warheads at sea; and about **2000** long-range strategic bombers (the Soviets had 192), plus about a thousand tactical bombers in range of the Soviet Union. (check numbers)
- ✓ • Since 1958 NIE's have not been made available to contractors like RAND, so that RAND studies since then have reflected exclusively the high missile gap estimate of 1958—as though fixed in amber—and the still-higher Air Force estimates since then. Having read the SNIE in the Pentagon and been told the precise figure and the basis for it, I convene a Top Secret briefing at RAND in Santa Monica to bring department heads and project leaders into the new world. For the first time in a briefing by me, I accompany my talk: each stamped Top Secret at top and bottom.
 - One: “Yes, Virginia, there is a missile gap.”
 - Two: “It is currently running 10 to 1.”
 - Three: “In our favor.”
- ✓ • “How would they know?” is the first question. I can't tell them the answer to that, because I'm not supposed to know. The reconnaissance satellite program is classified higher than Top Secret; my being told about it is a very unusual violation of the regulations, since I don't yet have that clearance. I hope to get it and I don't repeat the violation.
- **No one** in that audience believes the news I bring from Washington. I am, after all, saying that all their urgent efforts of the past seven years or so have been misdirected toward illusionary problems, based on wildly false premises about Soviet motives and capabilities. They have been working furiously in a dreamworld: a nightmare, but one from which they resist awakening. The amber holds firm, for months to years in Santa Monica.

Summary of Remaining Chapter Outline:

7. "My" Gilpatric speech of October 1961

I publicly exposing the myth of the missile gap and proclaiming U.S. nuclear superiority, thus ending the Berlin Crisis of 1961 but contributing to the Cuban Crisis in 1962;

8. Cuban Missile Crisis

I participate in two of the three working groups reporting to the Executive Committee of the NSC (EXCOM.), then holed up and sleeping in the Pentagon. That experience and my crisis study the next year leads to major findings not yet revealed to this day on the origins and ending of the crisis.

9. My Nuclear Crises Study, 1964

I reveal the use of nuclear weapons--as a pistol is used by pointing it, whether or not the trigger is pulled--by Presidents Truman (Iran, Berlin and Korea), Eisenhower (Korea; Quemoy, 1954 and 1958; Lebanon/Iraq/Kuwait 1958; Dienbienphu 1954; deterring North Vietnamese invasion of South Vietnam, 1956-60; Berlin 1958-60), JFK (Berlin 1961, Cuba 1962).

Suez

(1978-80
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(1203
TS/CIA)

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10. Joining the Pentagon

I become a full-time official (GS-18, highest civil service rank) on the day of the Tonkin Gulf hoax and attack, I learn that LBJ has secretly renewed delegation of nuclear weapons authority and intends to widen the Vietnam War--in direct contradiction to his two main campaign pledges opposing each of these, as he runs against Goldwater who publicly advocates both. I also learn that nuclear first-use attack is discussed against China 1964 (before and after its first test); against North Vietnam 1964, 1965, 1966 (Eisenhower recommendation), and 1968.

11. The U.S. "anti-proliferation" charade

After India secretly requests help with a nuclear weapons test following the Chinese explosion in 1964, internal discussions reveal high-level skepticism, by Secretary of Rusk in particular, about the very desirability of opposing nuclear proliferation by "our friends," like India, or even Japan or Germany; McGeorge Bundy warns that leaks of this internal deviation from our declared opposition to proliferation "would be as explosive as an atom bomb."

Rusk

The ensuing high-level Gilpatric Committee rejects the Rusk position and secretly proposes an anti-proliferation program calling for major changes in U.S. nuclear posture

and first-use policy. Declassified only a few years ago, it remains the best blueprint to this day for an effective campaign against proliferation led by the U.S. But LBJ secretly rejects the program, and it remains largely unfulfilled after forty-five years during which American "non-proliferation" efforts tacitly premised on maintaining U.S. strategic "superiority" have been essentially a hoax.

12. The Nixon "madman policy"

The president my "madman policy" in nuclear threats against North Vietnam 1969-73, and his criminal efforts to stop me from exposing it in 1971-72, leading to his resignation facing impeachment.

Epilogue

I discuss first-use threats and the "damage-limiting" first-strike strategy that supports them continue under Presidents Ford, Carter, Reagan, George H.W. Bush, Clinton, George W. Bush and Barack Obama, precluding effective anti-proliferation efforts, risking "limited" nuclear wars and maintaining on hair-trigger alert, along with Russia, Doomsday Machines that threaten all life on earth.